few leaves would infirm Adrian Slack's lines on that species, asserting it was probably easier to try to aerial-layer it.

Technically speaking, I first put the cut part of the stem into fungicide for approximately 5 minutes, then, after drying it, I put it into rooting-hormone preparation made by a German friend.

I followed the excellent advice of a Californian friend of mine who urged me to give the cutting 24 hours a day of artificial light. With 2 Triton tubes of (THORN EMI plc) 20 centimeters from the cutting, the *N. burbidgeae* needed approximately two months to develop tiny roots which, five months after I put the plant into a regular compost (1/5 fine-chopped bark, 1/5 quarz-sand 5 mm in diameter, 3/3 German peat), has grown 5 cm long roots. However, for ecomomical reasons (Swiss electricity, as everything over here, being awfully expensive!), I only gave the cutting 20 hours of light daily. The plant is in an aquarium 40x15cm large and 30 cm high. There is water in the bottom (approx. 5 cm.) and the pot holding the cutting stands on an upside-down pot. Daily temperature is about 25°C and night 10-18°C. The aquarium is set on a north-west windowsill, slightly open at night, and is covered with a 3 mm thick piece of glass. The electric tubes "rest" on the whole thing. I spray the inside of the aquarium twice a day and the plant now looks good, even if it is a bit sun-burnt. Quite normal with one-metre thick snow refleton from outside!!!

In conclusion, I shall state that the season when one makes a cutting apparently does not matter, as long as one has artificial light and can regulate temperature and humidity. Since I have absolutely no knowledge of botany, biology or any scientific background, what I would like to point out is that growing and reproducing such an apparently difficult plant as *Nepenthes burbidgeae* is possible for any ignorant, provided (s)he has the right conditions.

Adrian, wherever you are and whatever you are doing at the moment, thanks a lot for letting your passion get in!

DROSERA

by

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After you have been growing CP for many years, you begin to have a certain liking for one set of plants over another. I confess that I find myself liking to grow and observe certain *Drosera* more than others.

First, I like a plant that grows rapidly and large, grows in my conditions all year without going into serious dormancy and is easy to take care of in any weather condition throughout the year. I also like a plant that doesn't need repotting very often, that puts out a beautiful set of flowers that are large and colorful. Minimum care and good results are two qualities that attract my attention to my favorite species *Drosera regia*.

I obtained this plant which I got from Califonia Carnivores several years ago growing in a six-inch(15 cm) pot in living spagnum moss. The plant sits in an inch(2.5 cm) of water throughout the growing season and seems to like the moisture provided. of this *Drosera* is now about 0.5 inch(1.2 cm) in diameter and about 2 inches(5 cm) tall where the giant leaves emerge from the growing point. A couple of thick roots emerge from this stem to support the plant upright and arch into the sphagnum moss. These roots are 0.25 inch (6 mm) thick and are black in color except for the tip which is pale yellow! The strap-shaped leaves in the summer grow to a length of 18-22 inches(45cm-55cm) long and it is a beautiful sight to see about 15 of these leaves arch over the plant with the tips falling over the sides of the pot. In the early morning the tentacles tips

are covered with dewdrops. The whole plant looks like something from another planet. I can imagine looking at an acre of these plants which grow native to South Africa being a sight to behold. The plant puts out several flower stems at a time with each stem bearing 15-20 magenta flowers up to 1 inch(2.5cm) across. Each flower opens every day starting from the lowest and moving to the top of the stem. The entire stem may be 2 1/2 feet(75 cm) tall after the last flower opens. The growth of the flower did not seem to affect the growth rate or size of the plant during the blooming period nor when seed was set.

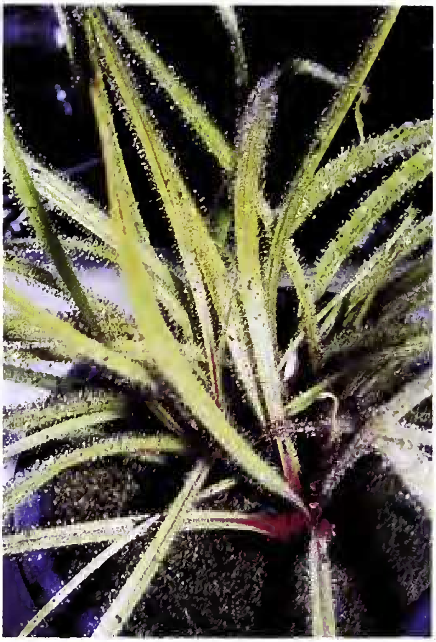


Figure1. *Drosera regia.* Photo by Joe Mazrimas.

The leaves of this plant are trapping mosquitoes, gnats and flies by the dozens every day. This nourishment is essential for a plant to be growing such large leaves. This plant does not like disturbance of its roots so I do any transplanting in December when growth is minimal. It is a good idea to do this job carefully and with minimum disturbance of the root ball. The roots are thick and rather brittle and break off easily like a skinny carrot. If this should happen you can plant the root to obtain another plant. Its a good idea to use the largest pot available since this plant will grow rapidly.

I am amazed that this plant can survive some really cold temperatures in winter without going into a dormant condition. Temperatures of 28 degrees F(-2 degrees C) in the early mornings did not affect the plant. In the winter the leaves grow shorter-about half the size of summer leaves. This is probably due to photoperiod being shorter in winter than summer. I'm glad that I can look at a plant that is green in winter when everything else is brown or dormant. The plant even traps insects in winter since it seems it has a powerful attractant in the mucilage that can attract insects from a distance. Similar *Drosera* growing nearby such as *Drosera slackii* and *Drosera pauciflora* do not seem to have this capability.

A runner-up to my favorite plant is *Drosera slackii* which is a beautiful rosetted *Drosera* with thick, wide leaves that stretch out to the pot's edge. This plant grows to a diameter of 4 inches(10 cm) or more as it ages. It is also a hardy plant in the cold winter and does not seem to go dormant for me at this time. I allowed this plant to have flowers once but I won't do this again because it took nearly all the energy out of the plant and didn't recover for 6 months or more. So now I snip the young buds off when I see them.

This plant sits in a sphagnum peat-perlite-sand mix of equal proportions and sits in a inch of water throughout the growing season. I give it less in winter. As noted above, it doesn't trap many insects in Winter so I spray its leaves with a fine mist of Miracle-Grow solution for acid plants made up to 1/2 strength New growth seems to respond to this stimulus. I apply this every 3-4 weeks or so. The tentacles of the plant and the edges of the leaves curl inward in response to this stimulus.

Well, that's my story on these plants and I'm glad to grow them. In the future, I will relate a story on my other favorite plants from other genera.